



MDCR/MCRC E-newsletter for December 27, 2013

['Knockout game' attack leads to hate crime charge](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/26/13

HOUSTON (AP) - A white Houston-area man was arrested Thursday on federal hate crimes charges for allegedly shooting video of himself sucker-punching a 79-year-old black man in a "knockout game"-style attack.

[New Victories for Marriage Equality](#)

From the New York Times, 12/26/13

With every new court ruling or legislative enactment or popular vote affirming Americans' fundamental right to marry, the arguments against same-sex marriage sound increasingly desperate and hollow.

[New MSU guide to Americans answers what foreigners want to know but don't ask](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 12/26/13

Page 4 explains why Americans often smile at strangers. Page 8 contains a handy tipping guide. And Page 35 offers some advice on asking someone out on a date.

[2 black Michigan state troopers win \\$5.2M for racial discrimination](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 12/24/13

LANSING — Two black state troopers were awarded more than \$5.2 million in damages Monday after a jury found the Michigan State Police racially discriminated against them by not promoting them to firearms examiners.

[Narrow ruling rejects Ohio gay marriage ban](#)

From the Detroit News, 12/23/13

Cincinnati — A federal judge Monday ordered Ohio authorities to recognize gay marriages on death certificates, saying the state's ban on such unions is unconstitutional and that states cannot discriminate against same-sex couples simply because some voters don't like homosexuality.

[Judge allows same-sex marriage in Utah to continue](#)

From the Detroit News, 12/23/13

Salt Lake City — A federal judge on Monday allowed gay marriage to continue in Utah, rejecting a request to put same-sex weddings on hold as the state appeals a decision that has sent couples flocking to county clerk offices for marriage licenses.

[Mayor-elect Mike Duggan announces 3 new top administrators](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/23/13

Detroit Mayor-elect Mike Duggan, who is set to take office in a matter of days, named three new top administrators Monday.

[Second lawsuit in a month filed against Mary Free Bed by a nurse alleging race discrimination](#)

From MLive, 12/21/13

GRAND RAPIDS — A second lawsuit in a month alleging race discrimination has been filed against Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital by a nurse who says she was not allowed to care for a patient because she is black.

[Student group sues University of Michigan over denial of funding for event](#)

From MLive, 12/21/13

A student group has sued the University of Michigan, claiming it was improperly denied funding for an event featuring a prominent affirmative action opponent.

[Ally pays \\$98 million to settle auto loan bias charge](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/20/13

More than 235,000 African-American, Hispanic and other minority auto loan borrowers who dealt with Ally Financial were unfairly charged higher interest rates for loans for cars or trucks due to discriminatory practices, according to federal regulators.

[Grand Rapids schools taking transgender issues on a case-by-case basis, not issuing new rules](#)

From MLive, 12/20/13

GRAND RAPIDS — Grand Rapids schools administrators are not planning on creating unisex bathrooms district-wide because of recent accommodations Union High School made at the request of two transgender students, a district spokesman said Friday

[Former Bay County employee who filed sexual harassment lawsuit gets out-of-court settlement of \\$250,000](#)

From MLive, 12/19/13

BAY CITY — A former Bay County Friend of the Court employee who filed a federal lawsuit alleging a supervisor routinely sexually harassed her has received a six-figure payout from the county.

[Scott Walker signs Indian mascot bill, informs tribes of reasoning in letter](#)

From the Cap Times (Madison, WI), 12/19/13

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker signed the controversial Indian mascot bill into law Thursday, but not before informing state tribal leaders in a letter earlier in the day of his impending action.

[Judge tosses racial Walmart intercom lawsuit](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/18/13

CHERRY HILL, N.J. — Walmart can't be held responsible for a teenager who commandeered an intercom system and ordered black shoppers to leave one of its stores, a federal judge has ruled.

[Federal appeals court lifts injunction blocking Lansing tribal casino plans from moving forward](#)

From MLive, 12/18/13

LANSING — An appeals court has overturned an injunction that had halted the process to open a tribal casino in downtown Lansing.

[Genesee County Road Commission pays \\$185,000 to settle reverse discrimination, whistleblower lawsuit](#)

From MLive, 12/18/13

FLINT — The Genesee County Road Commission has agreed to pay \$185,000 to settle a lawsuit filed by a white employee who claimed that the commission favored black employees over white employees.

[Bullied Michigan schoolkids to get a helping hand as new 24/7 hot line wins OK](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/17/13

LANSING — Students who are being bullied or hear potential threats from other students will have a 24/7 hot line available to call, now that the Legislature has approved a bill touted today by Gov. Rick Snyder.

[Jared Rodriguez speaks to literacy advocacy](#)

From The Rapidian, 12/16/13

Jared Rodriguez, new Advisory Council co-chairperson to the Community Literacy Initiative (CLI), has a rich background of advocacy work in Grand Rapids and in the state of Michigan. Most recently, he founded and served as President of the West Michigan Policy Forum before launching the Calder Group earlier this year.

[Arab American group, Ann Arbor schools ask state not to schedule tests on religious holidays](#)

From MLive, 12/16/13

An area Arab American parent group is working with Ann Arbor Public Schools to ask the Michigan Department of Education to not schedule state exams on major religious holidays.

[Grosse Pointe Farms parents say their kids denied 'equal education'](#)

From the Detroit News, 12/16/13

Grosse Pointe — Graduation rates are in the mid-90s at both high schools in the Grosse Pointe Public School System.

[Gov. Rick Snyder 'open' to talks on adding gay, lesbian protections to anti-discrimination law](#)

From MLive, 12/16/13

LANSING — Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, responding last week to anti-gay comments made by Republican National Committeeman Dave Agema, called the remarks "discriminatory" and suggested they had no place in any political party.

[Reverse-discrimination lawsuit filed by white employee against Hurley Medical Center moves forward](#)

From MLive, 12/16/13

FLINT — A Genesee Circuit Judge has ruled that a reverse-discrimination lawsuit filed by a white employee against Hurley Medical Center can move forward despite the hospital's attempt to have the case dismissed.

[Arab American group, Ann Arbor schools ask state not to schedule tests on religious holidays](#)

From MLive, 12/16/13

An area Arab American parent group is working with Ann Arbor Public Schools to ask the Michigan Department of Education to not schedule state exams on major religious holidays.

[Supreme Court's Dangerous Mix-Up of Diversity and Affirmative Action](#)

From DiversityInc, 12/13/13

In October, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in a case asking whether an applicant's race may ever be considered in university admissions. Based on the justices' questions and (even worse) the answers, the court appears ready to decide the wrong case. Listening to the argument, one would think Michigan's universities used "affirmative action" or "racial preferences" in their admissions policies. They do not.

[Interpreter at Mandela memorial branded 'fake'](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/12/13

PRETORIA, South Africa — The sign language interpreter used at Tuesday's memorial service for Nelson Mandela, and whose image was broadcast around the world as he shared a stage with world leaders including President Obama, was being called a "fake" by the Deaf Federation of South Africa.

['Patriot Week' bills pass Michigan Senate, prohibit religious censorship of historic documents](#)

From MLive, 12/11/13

LANSING — The Michigan Senate approved a package of bills which would expand the current "Constitution Day" in public schools into a week-long study of civics and prevent school districts from removing religious references from historical documents.

Senate Judiciary Moves Breastfeeding Bill

From Gongwer, 12/11/13

A bill creating the Breastfeeding Antidiscrimination Act that would prohibit the denial of full and equal enjoyment of a place of public accommodations or public service to a woman because she was breastfeeding was reported from the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday.

"It is the healthiest thing for mothers and babies to promote nursing for as long as we can," said Sen. Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor), sponsor of SB 674. "We want to encourage women to do it as long as possible, but every so often we find there are not people who know what the law is."

The bill also prohibits publishing a statement or notice indicating that woman's full enjoyment of a place or public accommodation or public service would be refused, or that her patronage or presence would be unwelcome because she was breastfeeding.

"Mothers and babies breastfeeding in public have been subjected to embarrassment in public. This legislation will go a long way to understanding," a doctor with the Michigan Breastfeeding Network told committee members.

A person alleging a violation of the proposed act could bring a civil action in a court for appropriate injunctive relief, actual damages, or presumed damages of \$200, or both injunctive relief and actual or presumed damages, a Senate Fiscal Agency analysis of the bill notes. And the court rendering a judgment in the action also could award all or a portion of the costs of litigation, including reasonable attorney fees and witness fees, to the complainant if deemed appropriate.

The bill was reported from committee unanimously, with support from the Kent County Health Department, the Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health, Planned Parenthood, Right to Life of Michigan, Spectrum Health, and others.

"Anytime we can support motherhood and healthy babies, I think it's a great thing," said Sen. Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge), chair of the committee and co-sponsor on the bill.

[Gov. Snyder: Dave Agema's antigay remarks 'extreme and discriminatory'](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/11/13

LANSING — Gov. Rick Snyder has added his voice to the chorus of criticism directed at Republican National Committeeman Dave Agema over his latest antigay remarks.

[Carol Cain: Mary Barra will face questions no other auto CEO ever gets](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/11/13

Two weeks ago, I had a conversation with longtime auto observer David Cole about the possibility of General Motors naming a female CEO.

[Arab-American civil rights group fires president amid controversy](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/11/13

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee fired national President Warren David, his supporters say, after he expressed concerns over the civil rights group's handling of sexual harassment allegations against its Michigan director.

[Guest view: Flint making progress in becoming more accessible for people with disabilities](#)

From MLive, 12/10/13

On a beautiful July day last summer, more than 1,100 people gathered in Flint's Kearsley Park to celebrate the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). With the support of the Genesee Health System and the help of Kearsley Park's Director Kay Kelly, people with disabilities and their friends and families came together with community leaders to enjoy the outdoors and learn more about our civil rights. It was a great day.

[Troy mom spared deportation, but others aren't as lucky as cases hit records](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 12/8/13

Every Tuesday at Detroit Metro Airport, a large plane fills up with illegal Mexican immigrants being deported.

[Pushed Out of a Job Early](#)

From the New York Times, 12/6/13

If there is one thing older workers fear in this economy, it's losing their jobs as they approach retirement. But that is exactly what happened in March to Richard L. White, who was the director of career services at Rutgers University for 22 years.

[Macomb County settles suit with black deputy harassed over race](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 11/27/13

Macomb County has settled a lawsuit by a black sheriff's deputy who says he's been repeatedly harassed because of his race.